

Linda S. Adams

Secretary for

Environmental Protection

## California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Lahontan Region

2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, California 96150 (530) 542-5400 • Fax (530) 544-2271 www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan



Arnold Schwarzenegger Governor

#### MEMORANDUM

TO:

Bruce Kinney, Deputy Regional Manager

California Dept. of Fish & Game

407 West Line Street Bishop, CA 93514

James Starr, Fisheries Branch California Dept. of Fish & Game

830 S Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM:

CHUCK CURTIS

SUPERVISING WATER RESOURCE CONTROL ENGINEER

CLEANUP AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

DATE:

FEB. 0 1 2010

SUBJECT: COMPLAINT NO. R6V-2010-0004, ISSUED TO THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME FOR MANDATORY MINIMUM PENALTY, HOT CREEK FISH HATCHERY, MAMMOTH LAKES, MONO

COUNTY - WDID NO. 6B260801001

Attached is Administrative Civil Liability Complaint for Mandatory Minimum Penalty No. R6V-2010-0004 (Complaint). The Complaint contains allegations that the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) violated effluent limitations specified by Board Order No. R6V-2006-0027, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit No. CA0102776, from August 14, 2006 through May 4, 2009. The Complaint lists the dates and nature of the violations. In the Complaint, Lahontan Water Board staff proposes that DFG be assessed a mandatory minimum penalty in the amount of two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$225,000).

#### Waiver of Hearing

Pursuant to Water Code section 13323, the Water Board will hold a hearing on the Complaint no later than 90 days after it is served. DFG may elect to waive its right to a hearing before the Water Board and agree to pay the proposed liability. Waiver of the hearing constitutes acceptance of the assessment of civil liability in the amount of

California Environmental Protection Agency



\$225,000, as set forth in the Complaint. If DFG wishes to exercise this option, it must complete the following:

By 5:00 p.m., March 1, 2010, an authorized agent must sign the attached waiver and submit it to the Lahontan Water Board's South Lake Tahoe office at the following address:

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board Attn: Chuck Curtis, Cleanup and Enforcement Division Manager 2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd. South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Please note that DFG's waiver and agreement to pay the proposed liability constitutes a proposed settlement, which will not be effective until reasonable opportunity for public participation has been provided pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations, title 40, section 123.27(d)(2)(iii) and the State Water Resources Control Board's 2002 Enforcement Policy. The Lahontan Water Board will notify interested persons of any proposed settlement and will solicit comments on the settlement for a period of thirty (30) days. Any settlement will not become final until after a public comment period.

As described in the attached waiver, Lahontan Water Board staff may withdraw the Complaint, return payment and issue a new complaint should new information be received during the comment period. If no information is received which causes Water Board staff to withdraw the Complaint, the settlement will be brought before the full Lahontan Water Board for approval at a future meeting. Payment of the liability will be due within 30 days of the settlement becoming final. Payment must be made with a cashier's check or money order and made payable to the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account.

#### **Public Hearing**

Alternatively, if DFG elects to proceed to a public hearing, a hearing is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Lahontan Water Board meeting on April 14-15, 2010. The meeting is scheduled to convene at a time and location as announced in the Lahontan Water Board meeting agenda. The agenda will be issued at least ten days before the meeting and will be posted on the Lahontan Water Board web page at www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan. At that time, the Lahontan Water Board will accept testimony and public comment and decide whether to affirm, reject, or modify the proposed liability, or whether to refer the matter for judicial civil action.

To ensure the Lahontan Water Board has the opportunity to fully consider written comments, all comments must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines identified in the hearing procedures that will be sent to you under separate cover. Written objections and materials submitted after the deadlines specified in the hearing

procedures will not be accepted, except at the discretion of the Lahontan Water Board Chair. Untimely written material or objections will not be accepted or incorporated into the record if doing so would prejudice the Water Board or any Designated Party. The Chair may choose to modify this rule upon a showing of severe hardship. (Cal Code Regs., title 23, sections 648.1 and 648.4.) Any person seeking to submit late written materials must justify why the materials could not have been submitted earlier.

Please contact State Water Resources Control Board Office of Enforcement Attorney Mayumi Okamoto at (916) 341-5674, or Taylor Zentner at (530) 542-5469 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Attachments:

1. Complaint No. R6V-2010-0004

2. Waiver Form

cc:

Harold J. Singer, Executive Officer/Lahontan Water Board Mayumi Okamoto, Staff Counsel/SWRCB, Office of Enforcement David Coupe, Staff Counsel/SWRCB, Office of Chief Counsel Hot Creek Hatchery Mailing List

TBZ/clhT: Hot Creek MMP ACL – Cover Memo, 1-20-2010 File: SLT/VVL: Hot Creek Hatchery WDID No. 6B260801001

### HOT CREEK FISH HATCHERY MAILING LIST

\*BRUCE KINNEY
DEPUTY REGIONAL MANAGER
DEPT OF FISH & GAME REGION 6
407 WEST LINE STREET
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bkinney@dfg.ca.gov
JAMES STARR
FISHERIES BRANCH
CALIFORNIA DEPT OF FISH AND GAME
830 S STREET
SACRAMENTO CA 95814

jstarr@dfg.ca.gov

GARY WILLIAMS
SENIOR HATCHERY SUPERVISOR
CALIFORNIA DEPT OF FISH AND GAME
12550 JACARANDA AVE
VICTORVILLE CA 92395-5138
glwilliams@dfg.ca.gov

VERNON CARR
FISH HATCHERY MANAGER II
CALIFORNIA DEPT OF FISH AND GAME
HCR 79, BOX 208
MAMMOTH LAKES CA 93546
vcarr@dfg.ca.gov

DISTRICT ENGINEER
DHS OFFICE OF DRINKING WATER
464 W 4TH STREET STE 437
SAN BERNARDINO CA 92401

MONO COUNTY HEALTH DEPT DENNIS LAMPSON CO SANITARIAN PO BOX 476 BRIDGEPORT CA 93517

BILL NICHOLS HOT CREEK RANCH ROUTE 1 BOX 206 MAMMOTH LAKES CA 93546 GENE COUFAL, MANAGER DEPT OF WATER & POWER CITY OF LOS ANGELES 300 MANDICH STREET BISHOP CA 93514-3449

BOB PIEROTTI STATE DEPT OF WATER RESOURCES 770 FAIRMONT AVENUE GLENDALE CA 91203-1035

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QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
ELECTRONIC COPY ONLY

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MIKE PLAZIAK LAHONTAN REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD ELECTRONIC COPY ONLY

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MAYUMI OKAMOTO STATE WATER RESOURCES CONT BOARD 1001 I STREET 16<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR SACRAMENTO CA 95814 mokamoto@waterboards.ca.gov

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD LAHONTAN REGION

In the Matter of California Department	)
of Fish and Game: Violation of Effluent	) COMPLAINT NO.
Limitations Contained in Board Order	) R6V-2010-0004
No. R6V-2006-0027 for the Hot Creek	) FOR MANDATORY
Fish Hatchery, Mammoth Lakes,	) ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL
Mono County, WDID No. 6B260801001	LIABILITY

This Complaint to assess mandatory minimum penalties pursuant to California Water Code (Water Code) sections 13385(h) and (i) is issued to the California Department of Fish and Game (Discharger) based on findings of violations of Waste Discharge Requirements specified for Hot Creek Fish Hatchery (Facility) by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region (Lahontan Water Board), Board Order No. R6V-2006-0027, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. CA0102776.

Staff of the Lahontan Water Board finds the following:

- 1. On June 14, 2006, the Lahontan Water Board adopted Board Order No. R6V-2006-0027, NPDES Permit No. CA0102776.
- 2. Water Code section 13385(h)(1) requires the Lahontan Water Board to assess a mandatory minimum penalty of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for each **serious violation**.
- 3. Water Code section 13385(h)(2) provides that a **serious violation** occurs if the discharge exceeds the effluent limitations (a) by 40 percent or more for a Group I pollutant, as specified in Appendix A to section 123.45 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, or (b) by 20 percent or more for a Group II pollutant, as specified in Appendix A to section 123.45 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations.
- 4. Water Code section 13385(i) requires the Lahontan Water Board to assess a mandatory minimum penalty of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for each violation, not counting the first three violations, if the discharger does any of the following four or more times in a period of six consecutive months (chronic violations):
  - a. violates a waste discharge requirement effluent limitation;
  - b. fails to file a report pursuant to Water Code section 13260;
  - c. files an incomplete report pursuant to Water Code section 13260; or

- d. violates a toxicity effluent limitation contained in the applicable waste discharge requirements where the waste discharge requirements do not contain pollutant-specific effluent limitations for toxic pollutants.
- 5. Water Code section 13385(i)(2) defines a "period of six consecutive months" as, "...the period commencing on the date that one of the violations described in this subdivision [Water Code section 13385(i), or Finding No. 4 of this Complaint] occurs and ending 180 days after that date." However, serious violations may qualify as chronic violations for the purposes of determining a "period of six consecutive months," and may count as the first three chronic violations, though such violations are not counted twice for the purpose of assessing the penalty amount.
- 6. Nitrite plus nitrite as nitrogen and flow are Group I pollutants.
- 7. The NPDES Permit includes the following discharge specifications:
  - a. Section IV.A.1.b requires wastewater discharged from the Facility not to exceed the following effluent limits for nitrate plus nitrite as nitrogen at monitoring locations M-001, M-002, M-003, and M-004:
    - i. 0.23 mg/L Average Monthly
    - ii. 0.31 mg/L Maximum Daily
  - b. Section IV.A.1.b requires wastewater discharged from the Facility not to exceed the following effluent limits for flow:
    - i. At M-001, 6.9 million gallons per day (MGD)
    - ii. At M-002, 6.5 MGD
    - iii. At M-003, 3.8 MGD
    - iv. At M-004, 2.5 MGD
- 9. Water Code section 13385.1(a)(1) provides that a **serious violation** also means a failure to file a discharge monitoring report required pursuant to Section 13383.
- 10. According to monitoring reports submitted by the Discharger from August 1, 2006 through May 31, 2009, the Discharger violated the NPDES Permit effluent limitations as listed in the table of violations provided in Attachment A, which is made a part of this Complaint. Additionally, the Discharger failed to submit the monitoring report that was to provide the monthly monitoring results for July 2006, which is also identified in Attachment A.
- 11. According to the definitions of **serious violations** in Finding Nos. 3 and 9, the Discharger committed 16 serious violations from August 14, 2006 to May 4, 2009, as shown on lines 2, 7, 37, 38, 41, 48, 51, 53, 69 through 72, and 74 through 77 of the table of violations provided in Attachment A of this Complaint. The amount of the mandatory minimum penalty for the 16

serious violations (\$3,000 for each of the 16 violations) is forty-eight thousand dollars (\$48,000).

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- 12. According to the definition of **chronic violations** in Finding No. 4, the Discharger committed 74 chronic violations from September 2006 through May 4, 2009, as shown on lines 4 through 77 of the table of violations provided in Attachment A of this Complaint. Fifteen of these violations also constitute **serious violations** as noted in Finding Nos. 3 and 9. However, these 15 violations do not result in double penalties. The 74 **chronic violations** less the 15 **serious violations** to avoid double penalty results in 59 remaining **chronic violations**. The amount of the mandatory minimum penalty for the 59 remaining **chronic violations** (\$3,000 for each of the 59 violations) is one hundred seventy-seven thousand dollars (\$177,000).
- 13. The total amount of the mandatory minimum penalty from August 14, 2006 through May 4, 2009 is (\$48,000 + \$177,000) two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$225,000).
- 14. Issuance of this Complaint is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code section 21000, et seq.) in accordance with the California Code of Regulations title 14, chapter 3, section 15321.

## THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME IS HEREBY GIVEN NOTICE THAT:

- 1. Staff of the Lahontan Water Board proposes that the Discharger be assessed a mandatory minimum penalty in the amount of two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$225,000), pursuant to Water Code section 13385.
- 2. The Lahontan Water Board will hold a public hearing on this matter at its April 14 and 15, 2010 meeting, unless the Discharger agrees to waive its right to a public hearing by filling out, signing, and submitting the enclosed "Waiver of Hearing." If the Discharger chooses not to waive its right to a public hearing, the Lahontan Water Board may proceed with the scheduled public hearing and consider testimony received from interested persons during the public hearing and decide whether to accept the amount of proposed mandatory minimum penalty. The Lahontan Water Board may also decide to continue the matter to a future hearing, direct the Cleanup and Enforcement Division Manager to reissue the Complaint to propose additional penalties under Water Code section 13385(c) and (e), or refer the matter to the California Attorney General. The public hearing is scheduled at the regularly scheduled Lahontan Water Board meeting on April 14 and 15, 2010, at a location and time yet to be determined. A notice of the

-4- ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY
 COMPLAINT NO. R6V-2010-0004

February 1, 2010

location and time of the meeting will be provided no less than 10 days before the meeting.

3. Notwithstanding the issuance of this Complaint, the Lahontan Water Board shall retain the authority to assess additional penalties for violations of the requirements of the Discharger's waste discharge requirements for which penalties have not yet been assessed or for violations that may subsequently occur.

#### WAIVER OF HEARING

You may waive the right to a hearing. Waiver of your right to a hearing constitutes acceptance of the assessment of civil liability in the amount set forth within the Complaint. If you wish to waive your right to a hearing, an authorized person must sign the Waiver of Hearing form prepared for this Complaint, and submit it to the address below.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
Attn: Chuck Curtis, Cleanup and Enforcement Division Manager
2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Please note that any settlement will not be effective until reasonable opportunity for public participation has been provided pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations, title 40, section 123.27(d)(2)(iii) and the State Water Resources Control Board's 2002 Enforcement Policy. The Lahontan Water Board will notify interested persons of any proposed settlement and will solicit comments on the settlement for a period of thirty (30) days. Any settlement will not become final until after a public comment period.

Payment of the liability will be due within 30 days of the settlement becoming final. Payment must be made with a cashier's check or money order and made payable to the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account.

CLEANUP AND ENFORCEMENT

**DIVISION MANAGER** 

Attachment: A - Table of Violations

# Attachment A - Table of Violations

MMP	0	1	0			-	-	1	1	-	-			-	1	1		- -	  -  -	-	-	-	1	-			-	-	1	-						1	+			-		-	\-  -
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Creek Hatchery MMP Violations	Violation Type		Serious	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Serious*/Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Serious*/Chronic	Serious*/Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Serious*/Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Concret /Chronic
reek Hatc	Date	8/14/2006	9/2/2006	Sep-06	Sep-06	9	$\vdash$	9/18/2006	10/23/2006	11/13/2006	11/13/2006	11/13/2006	11/29/2006	11/29/2006	11/29/2006	11/29/2006	3/26/2007	3/26/2007	3/26/2007	3/26/2007	5/7/2007	6/4/2007	6/4/2007	6/4/2007	7/9/2007	8/6/2007	9/10/2007	9/10/2007	12/10/2007	2/4/2008	3/3/2008	3/3/2008	3/3/2008	3/3/2008	3/3/2008	3/3/2008	4/7/2008	5/5/2008	8/2/2008	6/2/2008	6/2/2008	6/2/2008	000001010
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# Attachment A - Table of Violations

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Hof Creek Hatchery MMP Violations Table - Continued	Parameter	Flow	Flow	Flow	WOL-	WOIL TO THE SECOND	Nitrate + Nitrite	FIOW	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	Flow	Flow	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	Flow	Nitrate + Nitrite	Flow	Flow	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite		Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite		Nitrate + Nitrite	Nitrate + Nitrite	- 10 M 10	אונגמנפ + ואונונפ	
olations <sup>-</sup>	Location	M-004	W OO3	200	- CO-	M-003	M-003	M-003	M-004	M-004	M-003	M-003	M-001	M-002	M-003	M-003	M-004	M-003	M-003	M-001	M-002	M-003		M-003	M-004	M-004	M-001	M-003		M-003	M-004		M-004	ring in a
thery MMP Vi	Violation Tyne	Change	CIII/UIIIC	Serious /Cilionic	Chronic	Serious*/Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Chronic	Serious*/Chronic		Serious*/Chronic	Serious*/Chronic	Serious*/Chronic	Chronic	Serious*/Chronic		Serious*/Chronic	Serious*/Chronic		Serious*/Chronic	First three of four violations occurring in a
reek Hato	940	Date	7///2008	////2008	8/4/2008	8/4/2008	9/8/2008	9/8/2008	9/8/2008	9/8/2008	10/6/2008	11/2/2008	12/1/2008	12/1/2008	12/1/2008	12/1/2008	12/1/2008	1/5/2009	2/2/2009	3/2/2009	3/2/2009	3/2/2009	3/2/2003	3/2/2009	3/2/2009	00007076	5/4/2009	5/4/2009	000311	5/4/2009	5/4/2009		5/4/2009	First three of f
T T		N	20	21	25	53	54	22	26	57	28	29	09	61	62	63	64	65	99	67	99	3 6	So .	2,0	7.1	Ş	72	S	-	75	9/		12	<u> </u>

First three of four violations occurring in a pend of six consecutive months. Only the serious violation on Line 2 is subject to MMP.

\* - One of the 15 serious violations that are not included in the MMP calculation for chronic violations.

### WAIVER FORM FOR ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT

By signing this waiver, I affirm and acknowledge the following:

I am duly authorized to represent California Department of Fish and Game (hereinafter "Discharger") in connection with Administrative Civil Liability Complaint No. R6V-2010-0004 (hereinafter the "Complaint"). I am informed that California Water Code section 13323, subdivision (b), states that, "a hearing before the regional board shall be conducted within 90 days after the party has been served [with the complaint]. The person who has been issued a complaint may waive the right to a hearing."

	nay waive the right to a hearing."
(0)	PTION 1: Check here if the Dischargers waive the hearing requirement and will pay the liability.)
a.	I hereby waive any right the Discharger may have to a hearing before the Regional Water Board.
b.	I certify that the Discharger will remit payment for the civil liability imposed in the total amount of <b>two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$225,000)</b> by check that references "ACL Complaint No. R6V-2010-0004" made payable to the "State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account."
C.	I understand the payment of the above amount constitutes a proposed settlement of the Complaint, and that any settlement will not become final until after the 30-day public notice and comment period mandated by Federal regulations (40 CFR 123.27) expires. Should the Regional Water Board receive significant new information or comments from any source during this comment period, the complaint may be withdrawn, payment returned, and a new complaint issued. I understand that this proposed settlement is subject to approval by the Lahontan Water Board, and that the Lahontan Water Board may consider this proposed settlement in a public meeting or hearing. I also understand that approval of the settlement will result in the Discharger having waived the right to contest the allegations in the Complaint and the imposition of civil liability. Payment of two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$225,000) will be due within 30 days of the settlement becoming final after the settlement receives Lahontan Water Board approval.
d.	I understand that payment of the above amount is not a substitute for compliance with applicable laws and that continuing violations of the type alleged in the Complaint may subject the Discharger to further enforcement, including additional civil liability.
	PTION 2: Check here if the Discharger waives the 90-day hearing requirement in order to extend e hearing date and/or hearing deadlines.)
da Di Di	nereby waive any right the Discharger may have to a hearing before the Lahontan Water Board within 90 mays after service of the complaint, but I intend to request a hearing in the future. By checking this box, the scharger requests that the Lahontan Water Board delay the hearing and/or hearing deadlines so that the scharger may have additional time to prepare for the hearing. It remains within the discretion of the shontan Water Board to agree to delay the hearing.
	(Print Name and Title)
	(Signature)
	d.  (O)  a. b. c.  (O)  th  da  Di  Di

(Date)

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